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## BOTANY.

**An International Botanical Congress.**—After careful consideration of all the conditions it has been thought advisable to take steps toward securing an International Congress of Botanists in connection with the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Madison next August. Upon the return of Professor Underwood from Genoa with his report of what was done there, as well as of what was left undone, such a Congress seemed a necessity, especially when it was learned that the delegates to the Genoa Congress expected one to be held in America this year in order to complete the work left by them. Moreover, the Columbian Exposition will doubtless bring many foreign botanists to this country during the year, and most of these will attend our scientific meetings whenever it is possible to do so. It seems wise, therefore, to take advantage of these favorable conditions and to arrange for a formal Congress.

After a good deal of consultation on the part of those who could more readily do so, it was suggested that the Chairman of the Section of Botany of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the President of the Botanical Club (Dr. Wilson) should appoint a committee to take the matter in hand. In accordance with this suggestion notices were sent on Dec. 9 to the following gentlemen with the request that they serve on such committee: J. C. Arthur, L. H. Bailey, N. L. Britton, D. H. Campbell, J. M. Coulter, B. T. Galloway, Conway MacMillan, B. L. Robinson, William Trelease, L. M. Underwood, George Vasey.

It is to be hoped that the heartiest support will be given to the committee in their effort to bring to a successful issue the purpose for which they were appointed.—CHARLES E. BESSEY, *Chairman of Section G (Botany)*, A. A. A. S.

**Botanical Notes.**—Mr. B. M. Davis, in the December number of the "Annals of Botany" describes and figures all the stages of development from the carpospore to the young growing plant of *Champia parvula*, one of the common red seaweeds of both the Atlantic and the Pacific coasts. It is a valuable contribution to the embryology of the Floridææ.—A. P. Morgan describes in the "Journal of the Cincinnati Society of Natural History (October)" a singular new fungus of the

family Phallaceæ, for which he proposes the generic name *Phallogaster*. It appears to connect the Phallaceæ with the Lycoperdaceæ; in fact it is difficult to say why it may not be placed near the Puff-Balls rather than near the Stink-Horns. The single species is *P. saccatus*. Specimens have been collected in Ohio, New York and Connecticut, showing that it is not local in its distribution.—In the “Contributions from the U. S. National Herbarium,” issued in December, 1892, J. M. Holzinger publishes lists of the plants collected by C. S. Sheldon and M. A. Carlton in the Indian Territory in 1891. The novelties are, a variety (*fasciculata*) of *Solidago missouriensis*; a species of trailing morning glory (*Ipomœa carletoni*) with narrowly lanceolate leaves and large flowers (2 to 2½ inches long) which are solitary or occasionally in twos or threes; and a new Euphorbia (*E. strictior*), with very narrow leaves. Dr. Engelmann’s *E. polyphylla*, the description of which has hitherto not been published, is here characterized and distinguished from *E. wrightii*, *E. strictior* and *E. discoidalis*.—In the same publication Mr. Carleton publishes some useful “Observations on the Native Plants of Oklahoma Territory and Adjacent Districts.” His observations upon the native grasses are especially valuable.—Mr. B. B. Smyth, of Topeka, Kansas, has published a useful “Check-list of the Plants of Kansas,” with especial reference to his proposed distribution of botanical specimens.—The Contributions to American Botany from the Herbarium of Harvard University which the writings of Gray and Watson have made familiar to botanists throughout the world, have been resumed by Dr. B. L. Robinson, the Curator of the Gray Herbarium. His latest contribution consists of Descriptions of New Plants Collected in Mexico by C. C. Pringle in 1890 and 1891, with notes upon a few other species. Among the more notable things is a new genus of Umbelliferae to which he gives the name *Coulterophytum*, which suggests that the author has taken the hint given by Otto Kuntze in regard to the manufacture of names! *Geissolepis*, a new genus of Compositae is represented by a single species of prostrate plants from San Luis Potosi.—Dr. Britton, in the Transactions of the N. Y. Academy of Sciences (Nov., 1892), discusses “*Ranunculus repens* and its Eastern North American Allies.” He recognizes six species as follows: 1. *R. repens* L., sparingly introduced from Europe; 2. *R. macounii* Hook, Canada and in the Rocky Mountains of U. S.; 3. *R. hispidus* Michx., Ontario to Georgia and west to Michigan, Northwest Territory and apparently to Texas; 4. *R. fascicularis* Muhl., widely distributed; 5. *R. septentrionalis* Poir., eastern Canada to Minnesota, south to Pa. and Ky.; 6. *R. palmatus* Ell., South Carolina, Ga. to Fla.—In a “Prelim-

inary List of American Species of Polygonum" in the *Torrey Bulletin* for December. Mr. John K. Small enumerates seventy-nine species. Some changes are made in the nomenclature, and two new species (*P. mexicanum* and *P. pringlei* are described from San Luis Potosi, Mexico.)—"Amherst Trees," by Professor J. E. Humphrey, and "The Woody Plants of Manhattan in their Winter condition," by Professor A. S. Hitchcock, are two pamphlets which indicate the increasing interest in forest trees as constituents of the flora of a locality. The first named is the more popular and treats of many New England trees from the standpoint of the tree lover and the landscape gardener; the second is quite scientific, and is intended to aid the people of the plains (Kansas) to identify trees in their winter state.—A. W. Bennett has published in the "St. Thomas Hospital Reports" (London) a useful paper entitled "Vegetable Growths as Evidence of the Purity or Impurity of Water." He discusses the subject under four heads, as follows: I. Flowering Plants; II. Fungi; III. Algæ; and IV, Characeæ. The presence of the first is "a sign of comparative purity of the water;" of the second of the impurity of the water. The blue-green algæ (*Cyanophyceæ*) "should be regarded as rendering it (the water) unfit for domestic purposes." The chlorophyll-green algæ (*Chlorophyceæ*) are probably innoxious, in spite of the prevalent opinion to the contrary. The Characeæ are regarded as noxious "since when decaying they give off a strong fetid odor, accompanied by evolution of sulphuretted hydrogen gas."